

Amendment to the Claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of transmitting an advertisement from a sending party to a receiving party comprising the steps of:

initiating a communication from a data processing system of a sending party;
associating at least one pre-selected advertisement with said communication within the data processing system of the sending party; and

transmitting said communication with said at least one advertisement embedded therein to the recipient;

~~wherein said at least one advertisement optionally includes a hyperlink.~~

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

offering to a user an option of becoming an advertiser; and

enabling, if the offer is accepted, a procedure within said data processing system by which the at least one advertisement is associated with the communication.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one advertisement is ~~associated with~~ related to at least one of software or hardware operable with the data processing system.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the communication is at least one of e-mail, facsimile, voice-over-IP, voice-over-Internet, voice mail, video mail, video teleconferencing, and an animated presentation.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one advertisement is sent for a pre-selected time period.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one advertisement is sent up to a pre-selected number of times.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one advertisement is electronically obtained from a third party data processing system.

8. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the user is compensated for accepting the offer to become an advertiser.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one advertisement is at least one of visual and aural.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2, wherein the at least one advertisement is incorporated in setup software for one of software and hardware.

11. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein means for sending the communication comprises at least one of an e-mail client, a facsimile system, a voice-over-IP system, a voice-over-Internet system, a voice mail system, a video mail client, and a video teleconferencing system.

12. (Original) The method of claim 2, further comprising offering to a recipient of the communication and advertisement an option of being an advertiser.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein said step of offering to a recipient of the communication and advertisement an option of being an advertiser includes fraud avoidance means for reducing or eliminating fraud associated with the transaction.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein said at least one advertisement is electronically obtained from a third party data processing system using the Internet.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one advertisement is displayed to a recipient during a period of at least one of before, during and after the communication.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the data processing system is at least one of a computer and telephone.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2, wherein the at least one advertisement is embedded in the communication by a third party.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said at least one advertisement is determined at least in part by the recipient's demographic.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18, wherein said demographic is at least one of location, language, gender, age, income, and physical handicap.

20. (Currently Amended) A method of transmitting an electronic communication including at least one advertisement from a data processing system of a sending party to a data processing system of a receiving party comprising the steps of:

locating a data file containing signature information on the data processing system of the sending party, said signature information being appended to electronic communications originating from the sender's data processing system;

modifying the information stored within said signature file to include at least one advertisement; and

transmitting an electronic communication using the sender's data processing system to the data processing system associated with the recipient, said electronic communication including said information stored within said signature file including said at least one advertisement;

~~wherein said at least one advertisement optionally includes a hyperlink.~~

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20, wherein said signature file is associated with an e-mail Client operating on said data processing system of the sending party.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein associating said at least one pre-selected advertisement with said communication further comprises associating a personal testimonial by said sending party thereby lending credibility to said at least one advertisement.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the pre-selected advertisement is under the local control of the sending party.

24. (Previously Presented) A method of transmitting an advertisement from a sending party to a receiving party comprising the steps of:

initiating a communication from a data processing system of a sending party;

associating at least one pre-selected advertisement with said communication within the data processing system of the sending party, wherein the pre-selected advertisement is under the local control of the sending party; and

transmitting said communication with said at least one advertisement embedded therein to the recipient.

25. (New) A method of transmitting an advertisement from a sending party to a receiving party of claim 1, wherein said at least one advertisement includes a hyperlink.

26. (New)) A method of transmitting an electronic communication including at least one advertisement from a data processing system of a sending party to a data processing system of a receiving of claim 20, wherein said at least one advertisement includes a hyperlink.